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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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Masaya Mori

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08/08/2006

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DEPT. 18G

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EXAMINER

LE, MIRANDA

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2167

DATE MAILED: 08/08/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.		Applicant(s)	
	10/707,943		MORI ET AL.	
	Examiner		Art Unit	
	Miranda Le		2167	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>03/09/06, 03/25/04</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

1. Applicants' Information Disclosure Statements, filed 03/09/06; 03/25/06, have been received, entered into the record, and considered. See attached form PTO-1449.

Specification

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

In the Specification, paragraph [042], "26th aspect" should be changed to "25th aspect"; "27th aspect" in [0042] should be changed to "26th aspect"; "28th aspect" should be changed to "27th aspect".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later

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invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

4. Claims 1-6, 14-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kagawa et al. (US Patent No 6,910,118), in view of Gooch et al. (US Pub. No. 20030174710).

As per claim 1, Kagawa teaches a fixed length data search device, comprising:

a hash operation means for operating and outputting a hash value (i.e. an 8-bit address is calculated by the above-described hash function, col. 4, line 65 to col. 5, line 11) of an inputted fixed length datum (i.e. an input 48-bit MAC address, col. 3, lines 24-32);

a data table memory consisting of N numbers of memory banks (i.e. memory space 301 of the banks B1-B4, Fig. 4, col. 4, lines 35-41), where N is an integer greater than or equal to 2 (i.e. N is larger than 4, col. 5, lines 17-22), the data table memory capable of storing a data table holding a large number of fixed length data (i.e. MAC addresses, col. 4, lines 35-41);

a comparison means (i.e. comparators, col. 4, line 65 to col. 5, line 11) for simultaneously comparing (i.e. simultaneously compared, col. 4, lines 61-64) a plurality of fixed length data stored at the same memory address (i.e. memory space 301 of the banks B1-B4, Fig. 4, col. 4, lines 35-41) in said N numbers of memory banks, the comparison means for outputting results of the comparison (i.e. the respective comparators C1-C4 compare the read-out registered MAC addresses to the destination MAC address, and respective comparison results (match or mismatch) are output to the OR circuit, col. 4, line 65 to col. 5, line 11).

Kagawa does not expressly teach a pointer table memory for storing a memory pointer table having a memory address at which each fixed length datum is stored with said hash value as an index.

However, Gooch teaches a pointer table memory for storing a memory pointer table having a memory address at which each fixed length datum is stored with said hash value as an index (i.e. Each hashing pointer references a block of memory containing one or multiple IP entries, [0040]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art having the teaching of Kagawa and Gooch at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Mathews to include a pointer table memory for storing a memory pointer table having a memory address at which each fixed length datum is stored with said hash value as an index as taught by Gooch. One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make this combination in order to reduce the number of conflicts/collisions which occur in view of Gooch, as doing so would give the added benefit of providing a method and system that can be efficiently implemented in high-speed hardware as taught by Gooch ([0035]).

As per claim 14, Kagawa teaches a method of searching fixed length data (i.e. Searching Process, col. 4, lines 61-64) comprising the steps of:

performing hash operation said hash operation outputting a hash value (i.e. an 8-bit address is calculated by the above-described hash function, col. 4, line 65 to col. 5, line 11) of inputted fixed length data (i.e. an input 48-bit MAC address, col. 3, lines 24-32);

reading N numbers of fixed length data (i.e. MAC addresses, col. 4, lines 35-41) stored at an address from a data table stored in a data table memory consisting of N numbers of memory banks (i.e. memory space 301 of the banks B1-B4, Fig. 4, col. 4, lines 35-41), where N is an integer that is greater than or equal to 2 (i.e. N is larger than 4, col. 5, lines 17-22), the data table

capable of storing a large number of fixed length data (i.e. MAC addresses, col. 4, lines 35-41);
and

simultaneously comparing (i.e. simultaneously compared, col. 4, lines 61-64) said read N numbers of fixed length data with said inputted single fixed length datum, and outputting results of the comparison (i.e. the respective comparators C1-C4 compare the read-out registered MAC addresses to the destination MAC address, and respective comparison results (match or mismatch) are output to the OR circuit, col. 4, line 65 to col. 5, line 11) (col. 4, lines 61-64).

Kagawa does not expressly teach referring to a memory pointer table holding a memory address at which each fixed length datum is stored with said hash value as an index; and an address pointed to by a pointer in said memory pointer table.

However, Gooch teaches referring to a memory pointer table holding a memory address at which each fixed length datum is stored with said hash value as an index; and an address pointed to by a pointer in said memory pointer table (i.e. Each hashing pointer references a block of memory containing one or multiple IP entries, [0040]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art having the teaching of Kagawa and Gooch at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Mathews to include referring to a memory pointer table holding a memory address at which each fixed length datum is stored with said hash value as an index; and an address pointed to by a pointer in said memory pointer table as taught by Gooch. One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make this combination in order to reduce the number of conflicts/collisions which occur in view of Gooch, as doing so would give the added benefit of providing a method and system that can be efficiently implemented in high-speed hardware as taught by Gooch ([0035]).

As per claim 2, Kagawa teaches the fixed length data search device according to claim 1, wherein said comparison means comprises N numbers of comparators (i.e. comparators C1, C2, C3, C4, Fig. 2) for determining if two fixed length data are identical (i.e. match or mismatch, col. 4, line 65 to col. 5, line 11), said comparison means determining if any of the fixed length data stored at the same memory address in said N numbers of memory banks matches the single fixed length datum inputted to said hash operation means, said comparison means outputting the result of the determination (col. 4, lines 6-15).

Gooch teaches the device referring to said memory pointer table based on a resulting memory address (i.e. each hashing pointer references a block of memory containing one or multiple IP entries, [0040]).

As per claim 3, Kagawa teaches the fixed length data search device according to claim 1, wherein an datum identical to the single fixed length datum inputted to said hash operation means is searched in said data table through said hash operation means, said single fixed length datum registered in said data table if the datum has not been previously registered with said data table (i.e. The determiner may determine that the input data has been registered in the tables when a match-indicating comparison result is received from at least one of the comparators, and determines that the input data is not registered in the tables when a mismatch-indicating comparison result is received from each of the comparators (col. 2, lines 13-21).

As per claim 4, Kagawa teaches the fixed length data search device according to claim 3, wherein each of a plurality of fixed length data having the same hash value are stored at the same

memory address (i.e. memory space 301, Fig. 4) of a different memory bank in said data table memory (i.e. four different MAC addresses can be registered for the same hash output, col. 4, lines 42-54).

As per claim 5, Gooch teaches the fixed length data search device according to claim 3, wherein each of a plurality of fixed length data having a different hash value are stored at the same memory address of a different memory bank in said data table memory (i.e. Each hashing pointer references a block of memory containing one or multiple IP entries, [0040]).

As per claim 6, Kagawa teaches the fixed length data search device according to claim 1, wherein said fixed length data is a MAC (Media Access Control) address for network communications, and said data table memory is a MAC entry table memory for storing a MAC address table holding a large number of MAC addresses (i.e. MAC addresses, col. 4, lines 35-41).

As per claim 15, Kagawa teaches the method of searching fixed length data according to claim 14, wherein said step of comparing comprises simultaneously comparing said read N numbers of fixed length data using parallel processing, said comparing determining if two fixed length data are identical (i.e. the four registered MAC addresses are simultaneously read out and are simultaneously compared to the source MAC addresses by the four comparators C1-C4 (col. 4, lines 61-64)).

As per claim 16, Kagawa teaches the method of searching fixed length data according to claim 15, wherein said comparing comprises the steps of: searching an identical datum to said inputted single fixed length datum in said data table based on its hash value, and registering said inputted single fixed length datum in said data table if said identical datum has not been detected in said step of searching (i.e. When receiving the registered MAC addresses from the banks B1-B4, the respective comparators C1-C4 compare the registered MAC addresses to the source MAC address and output comparison results (match or mismatch) to the OR circuit 103, col. 4, lines 6-15).

As per claim 17, Kagawa teaches the method of searching fixed length data according to claim 16, wherein each of separate fixed length data having the same hash value is registered with the same memory address of a different memory bank in said data table memory during said registering (i.e. memory space 301, Fig. 4) of a different memory bank in said data table memory (i.e. four different MAC addresses can be registered for the same hash output, col. 4, lines 42-54).

As per claim 18, Gooch teaches the method of searching fixed length data according to claim 17, wherein each of a plurality of fixed length data having a different hash value is registered with the same memory address of a different memory bank in said data table memory (i.e. Each hashing pointer references a block of memory containing one or multiple IP entries, [0040]).

5. Claims 7-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gooch et al. (US Pub. No. 20030174710), in view of Kagawa et al. (US Patent No 6,910,118).

As per claim 7, Gooch teaches a fixed length data search device, comprising:

a hash operation means, said hash operation means using two types of hash functions to determine a first and second hash values of an inputted fixed length datum (i.e. performing parallel hash transformations on the MAC SA/DA addresses and on the IP source and destination addresses received from the various connected clients. The hash transformations are used to generate a hash pointer for each address input, [0041]);

a pointer table memory for storing a first memory pointer table, said pointer table memory having a memory address at which each fixed length datum is stored (i.e. Each hashing pointer references a block of memory containing one or multiple IP entries, [0040]), wherein said first hash value is an index, and a second memory pointer table holding the memory address at which each fixed length datum is stored, said second hash value as an index (i.e. performing parallel hash transformations on the MAC SA/DA addresses and on the IP source and destination addresses received from the various connected clients. The hash transformations are used to generate a hash pointer for each address input, [0041]).

Gooch does not expressly teach a data table memory consisting of N numbers of memory banks, where N is an integer that is greater than or equal to 2, the data table memory for storing a data table holding a large number of fixed length data.; and a comparison means for simultaneously comparing a plurality of fixed length data stored at the same memory address in said N numbers of memory banks, the comparison means for outputting results of the comparison.

However, Kagawa teaches a data table memory consisting of N numbers of memory banks (i.e. memory space 301 of the banks B1-B4, Fig. 4, col. 4, lines 35-41), where N is an integer that is greater than or equal to 2 (i.e. N is larger than 4, col. 5, lines 17-22), the data table memory for storing a data table holding a large number of fixed length data (i.e. MAC addresses, col. 4, lines 35-41).

a comparison means (i.e. comparators, col. 4, line 65 to col. 5, line 11) for simultaneously comparing (i.e. simultaneously compared, col. 4, lines 61-64) a plurality of fixed length data stored at the same memory address (i.e. the accessed memory areas, col. 4, line 65 to col. 5, line 11) in said N numbers of memory banks, the comparison means for outputting results of the comparison (i.e. the respective comparators C1-C4 compare the read-out registered MAC addresses to the destination MAC address, and respective comparison results (match or mismatch) are output to the OR circuit, col. 4, line 65 to col. 5, line 11).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill of the art having the teaching of Gooch and Kagawa at the time the invention was made to modify the system of Mathews to include a data table memory consisting of N numbers of memory banks, where N is an integer that is greater than or equal to 2, the data table memory for storing a data table holding a large number of fixed length data.; and a comparison means for simultaneously comparing a plurality of fixed length data stored at the same memory address in said N numbers of memory banks, the comparison means for outputting results of the comparison as taught by Kagawa. One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make this combination in order to determine that the input source MAC address has been already registered in the entry table 102 and therefore does not perform a registration/learning process in view of Kagawa, as doing so would give the

added benefit of allowing efficient hash search with suppressing the possibility of occurrence of rehashing as taught by Kagawa (col. 1, lines 53-56).

As per claim 8, Gooch teaches the fixed length data search device according to claim 7, further comprising a pointer selector table using said first hash value as an index to indicate which one of said first and second memory pointer tables should be referred to when a fixed length datum is inputted (i.e. Each hashing pointer references a block of memory containing one or multiple IP entries, [0040]).

As per claim 9, Kagawa teaches the fixed length data search device according to claim 8, wherein when the number of stored data of separate fixed length data having the same first hash value exceeds N (i.e. The rehashing occurs only when another source MAC address Ae produces the same hash output indicating the memory space 301 having no memory space left. In the present embodiment, since up to four MAC addresses can reliably be registered, the frequency of occurrence of rehashing can be significantly reduced (col. 4, lines 55-60).

Gooch teaches a pointer in said pointer selector table corresponding to the first hash value of an unstored fixed length datum stored is set to said second memory pointer table, said memory address at which the datum is stored managed with said second memory pointer table (i.e. Each hashing pointer references a block of memory containing one or multiple IP entries, [0040]).

As per claim 10, Kagawa teaches the fixed length data search device according to claim 9, wherein said comparison means comprises N numbers of comparators, said comparators

simultaneously compare all bits to determine whether or not two fixed length data are identical (i.e. each entry is composed of a 48-bit MAC address, col. 3, lines 13-23).

As per claim 11, Kagawa teaches the fixed length data search device according to claim 9, wherein said comparison means determines if any of the fixed length data stored at the same memory address in said N numbers of memory banks (i.e. memory space 301 of the banks B1-B4, Fig. 4, col. 4, lines 35-41) matches the single fixed length datum inputted to said hash operation means and outputs the result of the determination (i.e. The determiner may determine that the input data has been registered in the tables when a match-indicating comparison result is received from at least one of the comparators, and determines that the input data is not registered in the tables when a mismatch-indicating comparison result is received from each of the comparators (col. 2, lines 13-21).

As per claim 12, Kagawa teaches the fixed length data search device according to claim 9, wherein if another fixed length datum having the same first hash value as an inputted fixed length datum has not been registered with said data table, said inputted fixed length datum is stored in said data table memory, and said memory address at which the datum is stored is managed with said main memory pointer table (i.e. The determiner may determine that the input data has been registered in the tables when a match-indicating comparison result is received from at least one of the comparators, and determines that the input data is not registered in the tables when a mismatch-indicating comparison result is received from each of the comparators (col. 2, lines 13-21).

As per claim 13, Gooch teaches the fixed length data search device according to claim 7, wherein said fixed length data is a MAC (Media Access Control) address for network communications, and said data table memory is a MAC entry table memory for storing a MAC address table holding a large number of MAC addresses (i.e. MAC SA/DA addresses [0041]).

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Conclusion

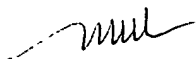
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Miranda Le whose telephone number is (571) 272-4112. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John R. Cottingham, can be reached on (571) 272-7079. The fax number to this Art Unit is 571-273-8300.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-3900.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Miranda Le
June 15, 2006



GRETA ROBINSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER